BALUCHARI AS THE CULTURAL ICON OF WEST BENGAL: REMINDING THE GLORIOUS HERITAGE OF INDIA

DR. SAMHITA CHAUDHURI[1] & DR.SUSMITA BHATTACHARYYA[2]

[1] *Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Bijoy Krishna Girls' College, Howrah*

[2] *Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Calcutta*

Abstract

Handloom industry in Bengal has its glorious tradition from time immemorial owing to their quality and demand. Handloom industry positionally took the second position after agriculture with considerable significance in cottage industry of India. Under several skills of improving the quality of life, this rural enterprise can be associated with both-skilled and unskilled awareness from the working population. The study has a focus on traditional way of weaving with acceptable hereditary skills along with the existence of transformed as inclusive component of Indian fashion industry. Baluchari has Indian traditional cultural attribute is mainly based on local high quality mulberry plantation in Bisnupur of West Bengal state. In this paper, secondary sources are used for the purpose of analysis and related interpretation. Books, journals, blogs are utilized according to the need of the research purpose. The objectives in concern to the present research will be –To understand the significance of motifs as indication of tradition and To analyse the contemporary context of Baluchari weaving

Baluchari weaving has become a cultural emblem of West Bengal since it conserves the time-honoured expertise of the locale and serves as a cultural continuity between the precedent and present. Evolution takes prominent presence significantly in terms of fabric type, colour sequence, design patterning and the existence of end product. the presence of transformed motifs has exaggerated the potentialities and propensities of Baluchari industry for transcending the national horizon to venture the neo liberal fashion platform.

Key words: Motif, Market, Diversification, Design, Transformation

Original Article

INTRODUCTION

Industrialization and corresponding changes has transformed the entire scenario of handloom industry of India. Handloom industry can be seen as a representation of sustainable model of economy depending upon low costing of capital with profound skill based orientation. Handloom industry in Bengal has its glorious tradition from time immemorial owing to their quality and demand. Handloom industry positionally took the second position after agriculture with considerable significance in cottage industry of India. Under several skills of improving the quality of life, this rural enterprise can be associated with both- skilled and unskilled awareness from the working population. Weaving techniques, use of fabrics and product specification- holistically exhibits. The illustrative exclusivity of indigenous knowledge. With respect to transformed time scenario perceptible variation is marked in the technicality of the Baluchari handloom products.

The study has a focus on traditional way of weaving with acceptable hereditary skills along with the existence of transformed as inclusive component of Indian fashion industry. Baluchari has Indian traditional cultural attribute is mainly based on local high quality mulberry plantation in Bisnupur of West Bengal state. In the

period of early 8th century, the technique of creating Baluchari was initiated in Baluchar village beside River Bhagirathi. Although, the technique was completely restricted in this particular locality. The extinction of the process took place because of natural calamities. After some time, the lost prosperous heritage has rejuvenated in Bishnupur town of Bankura district of West Bengal.

HANDLOOM SECTOR IN INDIA

In India, handloom weaving is largely an important household enterprise with predominantly a rural character. The abundance of raw material, cheap labour and high demand provide the backbone of handloom industry since ancient period in this country. This is why; handloom sector comes next to agricultural sector as the largest provider of work force. Liberalization of the international trade and change in the domestic economy can be placed as the reason of success of weaving industry and made it one of the largest provider of rural employment and remarkable contribution to the national GDP and revenue earning parameter. However, the current discomfort situation of this ancient industry is due to competition from power loom, change in taste of young generation as well as low level of innovation applied to this sector. As the main strength of handloom lies in introduction of non-imitative traditional designs that power loom and machines cannot replicate. Thus, handloom is characterised by extreme diversity of products, diverse modes of production, high flexibility and unparallel versatility. In the state of West Bengal, like the whole India, about 3.51 lakh handlooms are providing employment to about 6.66 lakh people (Handloom Report of West Bengal, 2009-'10). But, these weavers are facing several problems (like, insufficient supply and price hike of raw materials, shortage of experienced weaver, unequal competition with machine-made fabrics, poor infrastructure, ill-management etc) which results in decrease in handloom production as well as a decreasing trend of rural weaving group. In post-liberalization period, this decreasing trend has accelerated and handloom sector is under threat of extinction.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The emphasis placed on the disparity between expectation and anguish lies in the affirmation of the significance of dexterity in contemporary society for the 4.331 million weavers who build their livelihoods with the attachment of handloom industries in India, around half of whom live below the poverty line. Crafts or handicrafts are defined as "both objects of utility and objects of ornament" by the Development Commissioner of Handicrafts, Government of India, and are defined as "items manufactured by hand, frequently with the use of rudimentary tools, and are generally aesthetic and/or traditional in nature." (Last retrieved on June 15, 2015 from http://handlooms.nic.in) Baluchari sarees are one of the most valuable handloom goods in Bengal's cultural map, with outstanding creative possibilities. Despite possessing a distinct cultural character (Nash 1993; Liebl and Roy 2004), artisanal industries in emerging nations contribute significantly to employment, output, and export earnings. Despite manufacturing high-value-added products with skilled labour, weavers in Bengal's handloom industry typically work in the "informal sector" under precarious working conditions and for poor pay due to their secondary position in the value chain (Scrase 2003; Basole and Basu 2011). According to Fowler (2004), the livelihood of weavers is jeopardised by commercial replication and product passing-off as a result of mechanisation.

Weavers and craftsmen, as well as other informal workers and entrepreneurs, are likely to be involved not only in agriculture and handicrafts, but also in a variety of industrial sectors such as food, textiles, garments, plastics, metals, machinery, construction, and services. The use of technically cannot be linked to the labelling of "traditional" industry, nor can the players be characterised as "indigenous people" because craftsmen' creativity is frequently tied to their ability to

utilise new techniques. The concept of 'lokavidya,' or people's knowledge, has been projected by Sahasrabudhey and Sahasrabudhey (2001) with the incorporation of skills associated with those who do not have formal training or education but have the ability to cross over the said limit of understanding with the access of traditional hereditary knowledge. Occupational health concerns are a serious concern in the weaving business. Weavers' dwelling quarters are typically characterised by poor ventilation and inadequate lighting. Workers in weaving villages must perform their duties in an uncomfortable working environment, which can lead to health issues. Musculoskeletal pain, particularly back pain (11.46 percent), knee pain (16.67 percent), and joint pain (18.75 percent), were the most common health problems among Baluchari Saree weavers, owing to an unusual sitting position and a high-intensity workload (Ganguly and Ganguly: 2015). Dim vision and stomach discomfort were noted in 21.87 and 25 percent of cases, respectively, among the clinical symptoms. The incidence of fungal infection (6.25 percent) and the resulting obtrusive black area on the abdomen was another significant complication of the weavers. The majority of the issues were caused by poor ergonomics, bad work station design, long hours of static work, and the weavers' poor diet.

In "Balucharee of Mallabhum," Das and Mukhopadhyay (1995) examined the historical history and economic characteristics of Baluchari weaving in depth. Their debate centres on the ongoing dialectics between the handloom and the power loom in the context of Baluchari weaving. Chandra (2004) describes the mythology of Baluchari and Swanachari of Bishnupur in the background scene of modernization in the setting of Baluchari industry in the 90th chapter of his book 'Mallabhum Bishnupur.' He spoke about how the famous silk-weaver communities of 'Patra', 'Mandaranya' and 'Mandar' came to Bisnupur and settled down with the active backing of the "Malla" rulers. Historical evidence also suggests that the introduction of industrial fabric manufacture on power looms was a double-edged sword for handloom producers (Banerjee and Chakrabarti:2020).

In the face of the world's rapid technological advancement, Bishnupur's silk weaving skills, which use wooden pit looms, have remained mostly unchanged, with only minor adaptations and modifications (Banerjee and Chakrabarti, 2020). The products are artistically recalled as an embodiment of the locale's long-standing wonderful cultural legacy, with an exuberant display of designs in relation to attracting a niche market – network that includes wealthy clients, as high-priced products are considered in this context. As Appadurai (2002, pp. 46–64) analysed these ideas in the context of deep linkage to the silk weaving industry in West Bengal, an attempt to create "epic sonate" with the constant remaking of human agency can be tied to the conceptual framework of "technoscape" and "financescape."

METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVES

In this paper secondary sources are used for the purpose of analysis and related interpretation. Books, journals, blogs are utilized according to the need of the research purpose. The objectives in concern to the present research will be –

- To understand the significance of motifs as indication of tradition

- To analyse the contemporary context of Baluchari weaving

LOCALE AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Bishnupur, the district of West Bengal state, is located in southern part of the state in the Indian union. It is the municipality town located at a distance of about 150 km north-west from the state capital, Kolkata. This municipality town was established in the year 1873, is still a tourist destination for the architectural ruins, numerous temples made by red

lateritic blocks with marvellous terracotta carvings. According to 2011 census, about 67,783 people have been enumerated as residents of this town. Bishnupur is well-known for enjoying a rich cultural tradition of weaving stories in silk fabric. This tradition started here during Malla dynasty and royal patronage has made the weaving technique on silk fabric a cultural icon of West Bengal and of India. This weaving technique on silk fabric is called as Baluchari due to its place of inception, the Baluchar village. Due to competition faced from machine-made fabrics, Baluchari is facing tremendous pressure on its existence.

Government of West Bengal is trying to revive the art of making Baluchari silk in Bishnupur and save it from becoming extinct. Getting GI tag is one important step towards this direction and transformation according to the taste of present young generation upgrade the product a high fashion fabric, to increase the silk weavers employment. Product diversification shows that, this age-old weaving technique has been producing not only Sarees, but other fashion items like bags, wallets, shoes, home décor and western attires to make the design contemporary and beyond just outfits. On this ground, the study will show the significance of motifs in Baluchari weaving, so that it is considered as a high priority area in fashion world, protecting cultural legacy, increase employability of agrarian people with a focus of upgrading the standard of living of the locality in general.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Baluchari sarees were in high demand in the Mughal Court and among other royal families of the kingdom during the period of political familiarity between Delhi and Bengal. In Indian textile history, the Baluchar hamlet in the Murshidabad area was the site where a weaving method known as Baluchari weaving was given a new shape by local artisans. The craft suffered a collapse throughout the colonial period, as most weavers were forced to shift careers due to a lack of patronage and a variety of financial and political factors. Dubraj Das, Yajneswas Kar, Baneswar Das, Goshta Bihari, Khudiram Biswas, Goshna Karikor and others were well-known weavers. Murshidkuli Khan, the Nawab of Bengal in the 18th century, supported the handloom industry of Baluchari weaving and encouraged weavers to flourish their skill and production. Weavers moved to Bishnupur (Bankura district of West Bengal state, India), the erstwhile Mallabhum, a sudden flood in the Ganga, swamped the Baluchar village. The Vaishnavite Malla kings ruled Bishnupur, which was named after the Hindu God 'Vishnu.' This location is known for terracotta temples built in the 17th and 18th centuries that reflect Bengal architecture in its classical form; the Bishnupur Gharana of Hindustani classical music flourished in the late 18th century; and the Bishnupur school of art, which is still practised today. Bishnupur is also known for its famed handmade gorgeous Baluchari sarees, which have just been designated as a Geographical Indication (GI) of India (Sengupta, 2014). As the very magnificent anchal or pallu or the final piece contained brocade figured motifs of the contemporary times, when the saree is woven, Baluchari sarees can be considered as representations of socio-politico-cultural events. As a result, themes depicting Mughal rule, Nawabs' lifestyle, European activity and stories from Hindu epics can also be found in Baluchari sarees.

Motif

Representation of symbols should be aesthetically alluring artworks connected with conceptualisations and personification of beliefs in human form, animal forms, floral and geometric and abstract shapes. Symbol can be utilised as attributional identification beyond character, form, pattern and profile. Bhatnagar (2005) pointed out that, imagery of sign and symbol was composed and developed from the age of Indus Valley and Mohenjo Daro civilizations. In Rig-veda, information regarding Indian textiles came with the concept of weaving. Thus, artisans can be inspired by mythological sources since

the early ages of Indian history. From then, sacred stories, mythological sources, Vedas, Puranas and similar ancient documents could be functioned as the source materials for artistic existence of motifs. Simultaneously, environment, historical context, socio-cultural phenomenon, religious belief system, architecture and even trivial details of everyday life have appeared in symbolic structure of motif with artistic abilities of the craftsmen. Motifs reflect the socio-cultural learning along with philosophical understanding of the livelihood of the artisans. In textile of India, motifs are used in terms of symbolic existence of continual derivation of everyday life experience of the artisans.

Regionalisation as the source of cultural variability can be coupled with the reflection of artistic uniqueness of localization of tradition. As a consequence, artistic demarcation is prominently visible in the fields of distinctive style of specific locale of India. Chattopadhyay (1975) opined that, each regional specialisation can be viewed as the result of 'environmental influences'. The newly evolved trade-route to and from Indian subcontinent is the sole reason behind the inclusion of several motifs from outside India. Hence, the periphery of motifs went on remarkable exaggeration with simultaneous existence of traditional Indian motifs along with non-indigenous motifs. Some specialised motifs like natural and floral were initiated as the testimonials of Persian, Turkish and Mughals impact. Specialised motifs depends in India are determined by locational specificity, environmental attributes, native culture. Holistically, the Indian periphery of motifs grows day by day with the constant interaction of new cultural contacts.

In Indian motifs, inspiration came not only from nature but from animals, birds, flowers, fruits like peacock, lotus, elephant, mango, cashew nuts, cypress tree. The work of art in motifs of India were initially meant for personal adornment or gift rather than for the purpose of commercial use. Hereditary skills and transference of knowledge were two pillars of the cultural heritage of motifs. Creation of motifs were supported by socio-cultural customs related to fertility, prosperity, protection from evil power. Due to the influence of Hindu religion, figures of Gods and Goddess like Laxmi, Krishna, Ganesh are common appearances in the artwork. At the same time, abstract, geometric and linear designs focusing on technicality are popular with stunning and vibrant colours with respect to regional essence for augmenting visual attractiveness. Motifs usually cross over the regional and socio-cultural boundary, but in some cases, motifs may change according to regional as well as cultural variations depending upon the meaning and nature associated with it. Thus, usability is the yardstick of making motifs universal or specific in nature.

Varied motifs utilised in traditional sarees are associated with different forms and contents, contours, outlines and figures. A convenient classification of motifs made in India for Indian use can be made on the following basis: (1) skilled motif works of professional weavers for large market towns; (2) Luxurious motifs; (3) folk-motifs like *alponas*

Baluchari Saree- Motif Background

A) Weavers life-

    a. Floral, leaf and flowering shrub

    b. Natural- sun, moon, stars

    c. Animals- peacocks, elephants, horse

    d. Daily life

    e. Mango motif-*kalka*

    f. Hunting scene

    g. Persian vase with a flowing *kalka*

B) Islamic Patronage

    a. Nawab smoking a hookah

    b. Begum smoking a hookah

    c. Nawab smelling a rose

    d. Nawab riding a horse

    e. Nawab on elephant

    f. Hunting scene

    g. Court scene- Mughal and Persian

    h. Mughal art

    i. Rajasthani miniature motif

    j. Persian art

C) British Patronage-

    a. Western/European motif

    b. British soldiers

    c. Aristocrat ladies smoking decorative country pipe while an attendant looks on

    d. Lone lady riding a horse holding a flower in the hand

    e. Pipe smoking gentleman in typical dress of 18th century while a concubine pours his drink

    f. A Portuguese ship harbouring a port

D) Hindu epics-

    a. Radha-Krishna based temple culture

    b. Ajanta-Ellora paintings

    c. Terracotta temples paintings

    d. Traditional Hindu religious texts and folk-tales

    e. Triumphs of Lord Rama

    f. Scene from Bhagwat Gita

    g. Krishna and Arjun on the Chariot

Table : Different Types of Traditional Motifs used in Indian Textiles

Motif Name	Pattern	Source	Influence	Usage
Paisley	colourful, curved abstract figures- **droplet-shaped motif** which resembles a mango so it is called mangai motif or Ambi which means mango **kidney shaped motif** evolved from 17th century floral and tree life designs used in Mughal textiles	ancient Aryan boteh (botteh) motif- (meaning-bush, shrub, cluster of leaves or a small dense forest of small trees or bushes)	Multicultural, time of harvest, Royal influence from Mughal	Kashmiri shawls, Kanchipuram saree, Buttidar Baluchari saree of West- Bengal, Daccai Jamdanis, Banarasi brocade, Tanchoi silk saree and white embroidery of lucknow - chickankari embroidery, zardosi work and kantha embroidery.
Fish	Fish	Folk culture and folklore- symbol of fertility- oriental culture	Myth	Nakshi Kantha and Madhubani.
Parrot	Physical appearance of parrot	Mythology- desire and passion	Hindu mythology	West Bengal, Patolas of Gujarat and Paithani of Maharashtra, applique work of Orissa, Rajasthan embroideries and resist textiles.
Peacock	Physical appearance of peacock	Rig-veda and Atharva-veda	Indus valley site, in Mauryan Buddhist sculpture, Gupta period artifacts, Mughal miniatures, and in present day wall paintings and textile	Phulkari, folk embroidery of Punjab; Kaatiawar and Kutch mirror work embroidery, In Orissa Patola
Conch shell	shankha	Hindu culture and rites	Hindu rites; sculpture, stone carving and painted murals of Ajanta	Traditional textiles of Orissa and Kantha embroidery of Bengal
Kalasa	Purna Kumbha	Indian art throughout the history- ceremonial occasions and wedding in Hindu culture	Hindu, Buddhist and Jain sanct, represents the womb and the fertilizing waters of life	enrichment of textiles through weaving, embroidery and printing.
Lotus	multi-petal depiction indicating the multiplicity of universe	Spirituality and symbolisation of royalty	purity, peace and cosmic harmony	Chambarumal of Himachal Pradesh or Kantha of Bengal, Phulkari of Punjab or Kasuti of Karnataka, Picchvais of Nathdwara or Gujarat embroidery as well as Ikats and Painthani
Elephant	Physical appearance	Vedas, Hindu mythology	Asian cultures	Traditional Gujarati sarees Patola and Gharchola, Kimkhabs of Banaras, embroidery of

				Rajasthan and Madhubanis of Mithila have elephant motif in richly decorated form depicting war scenes and royal extravaganza
Rudraksh	The boota or central part of the flower surrounded by petals	Hindu mythology	Symbol of peace and power	Kanjivaram, Gadwal, hand woven sarees of Odisha
The Sun	sun rides a chariot drawn by seven horses representing seven colours of light	Hindu mythology	Rig Veda Gayatri Mantra and Hindu beliefs	Kanjivarams of Tamilnadu, Ikat sarees of Orissa, Phulkari of Punjab, Kantha and Guajarati embroidery
Bel buti (Creeping vine motif)	thin leafy curvy stems laden with flowers, buds and fruits	Persia, Mughals as ornamentation of textiles	Persian and Mughals by origin but have symbolic value for Hindus	Block printed fabrics of Muslipattnam, Sanganer and chambarumals. It is also liberally used on Kashmiri shawls
The Tree of life	branches of tree reaching out to sky, roots deep in earth; geometric and abstract forms	Hindu mythology and Buddhist scriptures	Western	shawls of Kashmir to hand painted kalamkari of Masulipatnam of Andhra Pradesh, Gond paintings and Mata nipachedi art- The Kalamkari of Gujarat this motifs used in diverse forms

Baluchari: Transformation and Product Diversification

Amalgamation of several designs is the common way to accomplish to the targeted product diversification. For baluchari saree, specification of design becomes the pillar concept although for reaching to the wider market scenario as well as target customers the pluralistic existence of designs can be acceptable through the facilitator of Computer Aided Designing process. Expansion of new innovative product range for the assortment of combining designs and sometimes materials could be a boost to the Baluchari saree. In 19th century massive scale of transformation took place in the periphery of market, consequently it became difficult for traditional crafts to persist in its own way. Mechanization, commercialization, consumerism, rapid urbanization and subsequent global economic processes are the contributory factors for bringing transformation in the handloom industry like Baluchari. Sometimes the transference of traditional skill and hereditary knowledge to their next generations became a problematic issue. Transformation of socio –cultural context becomes the most significant hindrance for the traditional craft like baluchari to capture the market. As a consequence, diversification of product market becomes the need for large scale venture of the scenario. Artisans initially attempted to adopt the western style in motifs and patterns although the effort was unsuccessful because of absence of indigenous essence with low quality product. A new journey has started afterwards in the baluchari industry with the scope of huge multiplication of finished products. The diversified product range must be ideal blending of glorious legacy and adaptive modernity with respect to enormous array of coloured products beyond the specified gamut. Newly launched products should be based on superb design with a focus on handcrafted finish. Baluchari is perceived as a culturally established and tradition –bound element. As a typical market strategy, baluchari industry can aim for diversification of product to persist in competitive scenario. For successful market approach the product must be 'different' as well as more attractive than similar other ranges of

product. The process should be enhanced with niche marketing or focusing on segmentation of market in the context of particularization of customers. For the diversification of baluchari products weaving can be assimilated with several materials as blended form with respect to numerous usability of intricate designs. Quality Assurance system becomes the prime need for establishing a stable space in the international market. Successful exposure of baluchari product through proper application of media should be priority in the contemporary circumstances. Online publicity is another area of priority now for the upcoming handloom products like baluchari. Arrangement of buyer-seller meet can be seen as a platform of publicity of the concerned products. Consultation with the specialists and attachment with boutique owners can be done to sell the desired product line.

Khera (1990) focused on the fact that in the newly reputable approach of the modern gaze, the multicoloured and full-figured saree was regarded as awkward. Customers' attention was drawn to sarees with fewer figures and a smaller colour palette (Mukherjee, 2003). The new-Indians initiated to gravitate toward western-style clothing. Due to the influence of western society, sarees with dull colours and little use of figures and artwork were preferred over elaborate motifs in multicolor and colourful basis. The gradual assimilation of the English colour palette and aesthetic into Indian artistic traditions and tastes became a style statement. The terracotta tiled temples created by the Mallya (sometimes spelled Malla) Kings and the folk stories popular in Bishnupur and Bankura influenced artisans, and they noticed the metamorphosis of practising tradition of change in the forms of motifs drawn from the changing world (Mukherjee,2003; Lynton,1995; Chisti and Singh 2010; Khera 1990).

The post-colonial period was first focused on western influence as a legacy of revolution in the baluchari industry, but the product-standard was inferior in the context of the global market. Those things were seen as cheap knockoffs of high-end items. Because of the lack of indigenous essence, the items were unable to meet client satisfaction at the national level. As a result of these bi-directional rejections, the entire Baluchari market was forced to enter a dark era, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

After the start of globalisation and liberalisation at the micro and macro levels, the situation has transformed positively. Customers are increasingly drawn to pure cultural articles due to evolving urban tastes, an educated mind and the growth of indigenous preferences. The resuscitation of the Baluchari sector in recent years has been based on the generalized enthusiasm and government initiatives. Previously, weavers went to alternate economic platforms to survive; currently, following revival efforts, they have returned to the baluchari sector with the hope of expanding these lively weaves with ethnic look.

The basis of a Baluchari saree was initially made of silk, but as time has passed, the base has included cotton and various materials. Two main challenges for the incorporation of different base materials in the Baluchari business are India's climatic conditions and cost-effectiveness. In terms of the yarns and colours utilised, a makeover of the Baluchari saree was attempted with an eco-friendly slant. Cotton Kapas is spun from banana and bamboo shot fibres, and the colours are made from fruit, flower, leaf, and vegetable extracts such as pomegranate, jamun, neem fruits and leaves, basil leaves, turmeric, marigold flowers, mangoes, and others. This organic Baluchari style has vanished from the fashion industry.

The wonderful age-old creation of Baluchari industry is today associated with socio-cultural regeneration and holistic transformation. Artisans must be trained in product diversification, which includes the addition of various other things besides sarees. Women's scarves, furnishing textiles, dupattas, and other utility items are among the new additions to the list of weavers' products. They should be aware of current market trends and scenarios, as well as the likelihood of

market expansion, which will result in a more intricate supply chain. A crucial point of departure for a successful attempt in the larger commercial set up is awareness of concerns of consumer choice and desire. Customers with a strong desire for Baluchari products can find them at well-established shops, commercial and government-run show rooms, and a variety of fairs and expos that serve as a recognised platform for assembling ethnic products under the umbrella word 'Baluchari.' Having knowledge of weaving, strategic marketing, and technology appropriation for sustaining the grandeur of the recognised art on an international level can be greatly aided by properly arranging skill enhancement programmes. With the incorporation of Baluchari brocade motifs, such as shwals, gamchas, and table cloths, the ethnic symbol of Baluchari is now enjoying a wide peripheral. Modern ladies are interested in switching to the readily available option of dresses in place of sarees, which are available in a wide variety. With the prominent presence of salwar suits, kurtas, salwar suit pieces with Baluchari brocaded necklines, western clothing, men's kurtas, cushion covers, table runners, clutch bags, draw-stringed potli bags, and other items, the periphery of the saree market shrinks. Baluchari weavers eventually begin to focus on a diverse market relating to baluchari after realising the economic realities of the market. The market expansion can be explained in terms of the availability of internet shopping for Baluchari products.

With the skillful intervention of celebrity designers, product diversification as a process accelerates. Designer Kallol Datta has transformed the traditional Baluchari saree into a layered ensemble with three-dimensional fold sleeves, created by combining two separate Balucharianchals. Among the well-known tale figure motifs of nawabs, sahibs, and bibis, the classic Baluchari is now groomed as regal coats, layered dresses, and gowns. Interiors such as bedspreads and lavishly embroidered pillow covers could benefit from the Baluchari. The Baluchari's aesthetics are a depiction of the crowning grandeur of Indian signatures, upholding this time-honored cloth and expressing its complex beauty with contemporary stepping and cutting-edge design.

The prevalence of narrative story-telling elements is a treasure trove of Bengali cultural identity. With the aim of establishing a new route of fashion by merging baluchari with various textiles, the designer duo Dev and Nil have stitched together a layered Baluchari jacket dress paired with striped palazzos. New-age designers can contribute to a new path as well as a trend in terms of styles and textures to modernise Baluchari, while simultaneously showcasing Baluchari in the mainstream fashion industry. Péro designer Aneeth Arora is enchanted by the inherent floral designs of silk weave. He shows off Baluchari's versatility and elegance by combining it with other fabrics to create airy clothes and draped gowns that are more eye-catching than just a storey textile. Another designer, Rahul Mishra, followed the Baluchari's 'sacred' identity heritage by relying on recognisable motifs as an intrinsic presence. He created unique items such as Baluchari dresses, scarves, coats, and gowns that could be sold on the international market. Shades of India, a Delhi-based textile company, has an interior designer as its director. Mandeep Negi is creating beautiful bedcovers, blankets, and cushion covers in effervescent jewel tones with the butedar Baluchari. Darshan Shah, the founder of Kolkata's Weavers Studio, was the mastermind behind the woollen Baluchari shawls. Despite adopting revivalist techniques, he supports commencing the process of study, recording, archiving, curating, publishing, and working with Weavers Service Centre, which is backed by MSME and T (Micro and Small Scale Enterprises and Textiles), Govt of West Bengal through Tantuja.

For the existential struggle with the foreigners, the weavers had no other option but to accept the power looms (Khera,'90) for the sake of rapid velocity in the process of production.
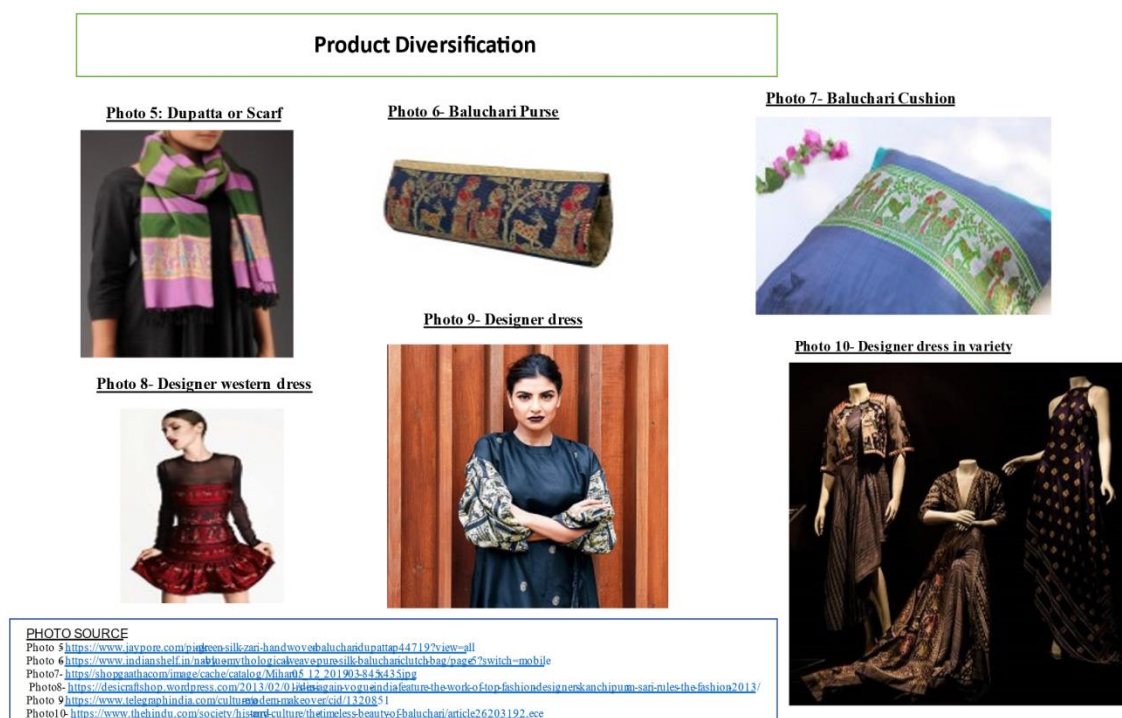
Figure 1: Baluchari – Product Diversification

CONCLUSIONS

Baluchari weaving has become a cultural emblem of West Bengal since it conserves the time-honoured expertise of the locale and serves as a cultural continuity between the precedent and present. Evolution takes prominent presence significantly in terms of fabric type, colour sequence, design patterning and the existence of end product. It is vital that all artifacts be transformed to reflect the tastes of younger generations. Baluchari weaving should be also perceived as fresh spirit in the minds of contemporary Indian and international fashion designers. This regional landmark is now providing opportunity for both digitally skilled graduates of urban design schools and unskilled rural weavers. Weavers offer hands-on instruction in order to focus on global market aspirations. Diversified products are also depicted in visual media to encourage designers to use their imaginations. Original variety of Baluchari weaving has a lot of potential to compete with other well-known items of the same sort on the market. There is a large area of research where the weaving process and final workmanship would be studied in depth, with the primary goal of improving the employment quality of weavers and preserving the country's "epic sonnet" for a longer period of time. The involvement of urbanites may encourage rural weavers' inventiveness by expanding the scope of a sustainable economy based on local home supply chains. In this age of cultural globalization, the scope and periphery are markedly intensified with the new scope of liberalism. As consequence of the influence of western impact, the trend and pattern of Baluchari industry has transformed holistically. The world of designing has revolutionized with the advent of post modernity in the craft and art sector. The impact of abstract and graphical connotations can interfere in the Baluchari product principally in the motifs. Hence the presence of transformed motifs has exaggerated the potentialities and propensities of Baluchari industry for transcending the national horizon to venture the neo liberal fashion platform.

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